General Assembly

Distr.: General
13 March 2001

Fifty-fifth session
Agenda item 114 (*b*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/55/602/Add.2 and Corr.1)*]

55/108. The right to development

The General Assembly,

Guided by the Charter of the United Nations, expressing in particular the determination to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom and to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples,

Recalling that the Declaration on the Right to Development[1] confirmed that the right to development is an inalienable human right and that equality of opportunity for development is a prerogative both of nations and of individuals who make up nations,

Noting that the World Conference on Human Rights, held at Vienna from 14 to 25 June 1993, reaffirmed the right to development as a universal and inalienable right and an integral part of all fundamental human rights,[2]

Recognizing that the Declaration on the Right to Development constitutes an integral link between the Universal Declaration of Human Rights[3] and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993[2] through its elaboration of a holistic vision integrating economic, social and cultural rights with civil and political rights,

Expressing its concern that, more than fifty years after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the unacceptable situation of absolute poverty, hunger, disease, lack of adequate shelter, illiteracy and hopelessness remains the lot of over one billion people,

Emphasizing that the promotion, protection and realization of the right to development are an integral part of the promotion and protection of all human rights,

Noting that the human person is the central subject of development and that development policy should therefore make the human being the main participant in and beneficiary of development,

[1] Resolution 41/128, annex.
[2] See A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.
[3] Resolution 217 A (III).

Stressing the importance of creating an economic, political, social, cultural and legal environment that will enable people to achieve social development,

Affirming the need to apply a gender perspective in the implementation of the right to development, inter alia, by ensuring that women play an active role in the development process,

Emphasizing that the empowerment of women and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society is fundamental for development,

Underlining the fact that the realization of the right to development requires effective development policies at the national level, as well as equitable economic relations and a favourable economic environment at the international level,

Welcoming in this regard the adoption by the General Assembly of the Agenda for Development,[4] which declares that development is one of the main priorities of the United Nations and which aims at invigorating a renewed and strengthened partnership for development, based on the imperatives of mutual benefits and genuine interdependence,

Noting with concern that the Declaration on the Right to Development is insufficiently disseminated and should be taken into account, as appropriate, in bilateral and multilateral cooperation programmes, national development strategies and policies and activities of international organizations,

Recalling the need for coordination and cooperation throughout the United Nations system for a more effective promotion and realization of the right to development,

Underlining the important role of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in the promotion and protection of the right to development, as mandated in paragraph 4 (*c*) of General Assembly resolution 48/141 of 20 December 1993,

Recalling its resolution 54/175 of 17 December 1999,

Taking note of Commission on Human Rights resolution 2000/5 of 13 April 2000,[5]

Welcoming the report of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on the Right to Development on its second session,[6] including the proposed strategy contained therein, and welcoming in particular the recommendation that a follow-up mechanism should be established to ensure promotion and implementation of the Declaration on the Right to Development,

1. *Reaffirms* the importance of the right to development for every human person and all peoples in all countries, in particular the developing countries, as an integral part of their fundamental human rights, as well as the potential contribution that its realization could make to the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms;

2. *Recognizes* that the passage of more than fifty years since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights[3] demands the strengthening of efforts to

[4] Resolution 51/240, annex.

[5] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2000, Supplement No. 3* and corrigendum (E/2000/23 and Corr.1), chap. II, sect. A.

[6] E/CN.4/1998/29.

place all human rights and, in this context, the right to development in particular, at the top of the global agenda;

3. *Reiterates* that:

(*a*) The essence of the right to development is the principle that the human person is the central subject of development and that the right to life includes within it existence in human dignity with the minimum necessities of life;

(*b*) The existence of widespread absolute poverty inhibits the full and effective enjoyment of human rights and renders democracy and popular participation fragile;

(*c*) For peace and stability to endure, national action and international action and cooperation are required to promote a better life for all in larger freedom, a critical element of which is the eradication of poverty;

4. *Reaffirms* that democracy, development and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development, are interdependent and mutually reinforcing, and in this context affirms that:

(*a*) The development experiences of countries reflect differences with regard to both progress and setbacks, and that the development spectrum has a wide range, not only between countries but also within countries;

(*b*) A number of developing countries have experienced rapid economic growth in the recent past and have become dynamic partners in the international economy;

(*c*) At the same time, the gap between developed and developing countries remains unacceptably wide and developing countries continue to face difficulties in participating in the globalization process, and many risk being marginalized and effectively excluded from its benefits;

(*d*) Democracy, which is spreading everywhere, has raised development expectations everywhere, that their non-fulfilment risks rekindling non-democratic forces, and that structural reforms that do not take social realities into account could destabilize democratization processes;

(*e*) Effective popular participation is an essential component of successful and lasting development;

(*f*) Democracy, respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development, transparent and accountable governance and administration in all sectors of society, and effective participation by civil society are an essential part of the necessary foundations for the realization of social and people-centred sustainable development;

(*g*) The participation of developing countries in the international economic decision-making process needs to be broadened and strengthened;

5. *Urges* all States to eliminate all obstacles to development at all levels by pursuing the promotion and protection of economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights, implementing comprehensive development programmes at the national level, integrating those rights into development activities and promoting effective international cooperation;

6. *Reaffirms* that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated and that the universality, objectivity, impartiality and non-selectivity of the consideration of human rights issues must be ensured;

7. *Affirms* that international cooperation is acknowledged more than ever as a necessity deriving from recognized mutual interest and, therefore, that such cooperation should be strengthened in order to support the efforts of developing countries to solve their economic and social problems and to fulfil their obligations to promote and protect all human rights;

8. *Welcomes* the intention of the Secretary-General to give high priority to the right to development, and urges all States to promote further the right to development as a vital element in a balanced human rights programme;

9. *Also welcomes* the high priority assigned by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to activities relating to the right to development, and urges the Office of the High Commissioner to continue to implement Commission on Human Rights resolution 1998/72 of 22 April 1998;[7]

10. *Further welcomes* Economic and Social Council decision 1998/269 of 30 July 1998 authorizing the establishment by the Commission on Human Rights of a follow-up mechanism, consisting of an open-ended working group on the right to development and an independent expert with a mandate to submit to the working group at each of its sessions a study on the current state of progress in the implementation of the right to development, as provided for in Commission resolution 1998/72;

11. *Welcomes* the holding at Geneva from 18 to 22 September 2000 of the first session of the Open-ended Working Group on the Right to Development under the chairmanship of Mr. M. S. Dembri (Algeria), and encourages the Working Group to proceed with its second session, scheduled for January 2001;

12. *Takes note* of the coordination mechanisms and initiatives within the United Nations system in which the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights participates to promote the implementation of the right to development;

13. *Also takes note* of the second report of the independent expert on the right to development,[8] which focuses on poverty eradication as a priority area requiring attention in the realization of the right to development;

14. *Further takes note* of the *Human Development Report 2000*, of the United Nations Development Programme,[9] and the *World Development Report 2000/2001: Attacking Poverty*, of the World Bank,[10] which cover issues relevant to human rights and the right to development, and welcomes the participation in the Working Group of representatives of international financial institutions, as well as that of relevant United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes and non-governmental organizations, in accordance with relevant resolutions of the Economic and Social Council;

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[7] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1998, Supplement No. 3* (E/1998/23), chap. II, sect. A.

[8] See A/55/306.

[9] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.00.III.B.8.

[10] Published for the World Bank by Oxford University Press, New York, 2000.

15. *Invites* the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to submit a report to the Commission on Human Rights each year for the duration of the mechanism, to provide interim reports to the Working Group and to make those reports available to the independent expert, with each report covering:

(*a*) The activities of her Office relating to the implementation of the right to development, as contained in her mandate;

(*b*) The implementation of resolutions of the General Assembly and the Commission with regard to the right to development;

(*c*) Inter-agency coordination within the United Nations system for the implementation of relevant resolutions of the Commission in that regard;

16. *Urges* the United Nations system to continue to support the implementation of the recent resolutions of the Commission on Human Rights regarding the right to development;

17. *Calls upon* the Secretary-General to ensure that the Working Group and the independent expert receive all necessary assistance, in particular the staff and resources required to fulfil their mandates;

18. *Calls upon* the Working Group to take note of the deliberations on the right to development during the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly and the fifty-sixth session of the Commission on Human Rights, and any other issue relevant to the right to development;

19. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session and to the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-seventh session a comprehensive report on the implementation of the various provisions of the present resolution;

20. *Decides* to continue consideration of this question, as a matter of priority, at its fifty-sixth session.

81st plenary meeting
4 December 2000